

Expected Controversies: Legacies of Divorce

In September 2001 the Ann Martin Children's Center (Oakland) asked a panel consisting of a child therapist and author, Diane Ehrensaft, Ph.D.; a jurist, Justice Donald King (ret., California Court of Appeal, First Appellate District); and the author to discuss the recent book *The Unexpected Legacy of Divorce: A 25 Year Landmark Study*, by Judith S. Wallerstein and co-authors Julia M. Lewis and Sandra Blakeslee (Hyperion Press 2000). In the book Dr. Wallerstein finds that though children can and do learn to cope with divorce, its greatest impact does not emerge until adulthood. This article is based on the remarks from that panel, specifically directed at policy implications for courts and for mediation resulting from Dr. Wallerstein's book.

Many people have tackled the task of challenging Judith Wallerstein's work on divorce.¹ A high level of controversy has swirled around her presentations of "the children of divorce" and her research methods, and many of her findings have been disputed or replaced by other scholarly work.² Nevertheless, something about what she says captures the feelings of her audiences.

Dr. Wallerstein has a finely tuned clinical ear for children's experiences. When she speaks, we hear the pain of the people she has followed for so many years. She is one of the few people who can make a psychological understanding of a child come alive for people in the legal system. She has an uncommon gift for capturing the interior of another's experience and relating it to us in a very personal way, a way that allows us instantly to recognize the emotional landscape within a child, and therefore to be able to sympathize, empathize, understand. Many people feel deeply understood by her approach.

Leaving the controversy to one side for a moment, what is valuable and important about the message of this work? How should parents and professionals understand the message? For professionals, the task is to translate this message to clients in a way that will be helpful to them. For parents, the task is to try to discern what is appropriate to take in on a more personal level.

The question most frequently asked by parents in mediation and co-parent counseling is, What can I do to make this situation better for my child? Parents are crippled with guilt about the effects of their breakup on their children. This guilt keeps them from being able to do for their children exactly what is most relieving about Dr. Wallerstein's work: to listen to their children's pain.



MARY A. DURYEE, PH.D.

Private psychology and mediation practice (Oakland)

This article reflects on our ambivalent relationship to divorce, to divorcing parents, to our work as professionals in family law, and to the state of our family courts. The heated controversies among professionals about divorce, its benefits, and its harmful effects are not explained solely by differences in research methodology or intellectual perspective. While there have been solid responses from researchers to Judith Wallerstein's recent work *The Unexpected Legacy of Divorce* (most notably *For Better or Worse* by E. Mavis Hetherington), the emotional resonance of parents and children to Wallerstein's work in the popular press demands our attention and explanation. ■

Recently, two parents in mediation described their children at length and in detail as having come through the separation and divorce well. When they were asked what they had done to contribute to this resilience, the first item on their list was, "We listened and still listen to their pain about the divorce." Such a striking first response deserved a follow-up query: when asked what it was like for *them* to listen to their children's pain, one immediately said, "It breaks my heart to have hurt my children." Few parents have the courage to be so directly and simply in touch with remorse.

This is our dilemma: Sometimes the most considered decision, the wisest option for some in the family, causes pain to others in the family. Our desire for congruence would like to make it otherwise—if the children are hurt, the decision to divorce must have been wrong; or, if the decision is correct, then the children must be better off in the long run.³ Dr. Wallerstein seems to accuse current-day mental health professionals of making the error represented by the latter position. Critics of Dr. Wallerstein accuse her of making the first error.

An important distinction must be made between guilt and remorse. Guilt is a very human, very real emotion. Like anger, it is an important source of information, and a very bad basis for decision or action. Both anger and guilt are powerful calls to action, like an alarm signaling that a fire has broken out. Like the alarm, which itself does not put out the fire, neither guilt nor anger provides resolution. Often, a great deal of psychological work must occur between the experience of the guilt and its transformation into useful information or action.

The guilt that parents feel severely limits their ability to be parents, to make good decisions about their children or themselves. Many of us use whatever means we can find to relieve ourselves from the intolerability of our feelings of guilt. We use various defensive maneuvers: projecting the guilt out in the form of blame; displacing and containing it by adopting rigid stances about "the one and only acceptable custody plan"; inappropriately failing to defend oneself appropriately or to protect one's parental sphere and relationship; and denying that any harm has been done to our children, saying they are "fine, just fine." Guilt, undigested and unresolved, is internally corrosive to one's self-esteem and becomes a handicap that distorts parental ability and the relationship between parent and child.

Remorse, on the other hand, is appropriate. In the family transition of divorce or separation, everybody hurts. The children did not ask for this, nor did they do anything to "earn" this pain. Remorse is like grief: it burns hotly in a purifying fire that does not ultimately injure the mourner or those around him or her and contributes to our ability to respond with compassion to the pain of others. Remorse does not excuse one from assuming responsibility for his or her own actions. On the contrary, remorse supports greater personal responsibility because the continuing injury to self-esteem caused by guilt is not present, and, therefore, there is less need to defend oneself by assigning blame to others. Remorse is the capacity to tolerate pain, both one's own and one's children's, without "doing" something with it.

As professionals working with people who are separating, we have a responsibility to be able to experience and tolerate parents' pain so that they in turn are able to tolerate their children's pain in a parallel process. Our task is to model the capacity to listen to pain, without having immediately to "fix it." For those of us (professionals included) who live through our own separations and divorces, the challenge is to feel legitimate remorse, which allows us to hear and bear the pain of our children, and find a way to avoid crippling and neurotic guilt, which ultimately seeks to justify the self and silence the other.

One unintended consequence of Wallerstein's research, especially the tone of its presentation, is to make parents feel scolded for having "failed at marriage." A major function that professionals can serve is to translate this research for parents in a manner that does not increase their burden of guilt. We need to help parents transform their guilt into remorse, a process mirroring Freud's idea of therapy as a process that transforms neurotic misery into ordinary sadness.

What is Dr. Wallerstein's main message? She says:

We have made divorce an acceptable alternative. Mostly that's a good thing, but there is negative fallout from this, and we shouldn't cover that up.

We (collectively) don't protect our children.

We conflate children's needs and parents' needs as if they were one and the same.

Divorce has a "sleeping effect" that shows up in children's identities when they become adults.

Divorce causes a profound change in the relationship between parents and children because the children lose the opportunity to develop internal templates about couples operating together ("usable images" is her phrase for this).

And, finally, the divorce itself acts as a screen memory for the whole parental relationship, so that memories and family histories are rewritten, excising the courtship, love, and togetherness that had once existed.

These findings require context in order to be understood, and there are two contexts that may be most useful. First, we need to see (briefly) how this research fits together with the research on divorce. Second, we need to identify the social context: what was the soup that these "children of divorce" were swimming in when their parents divorced?

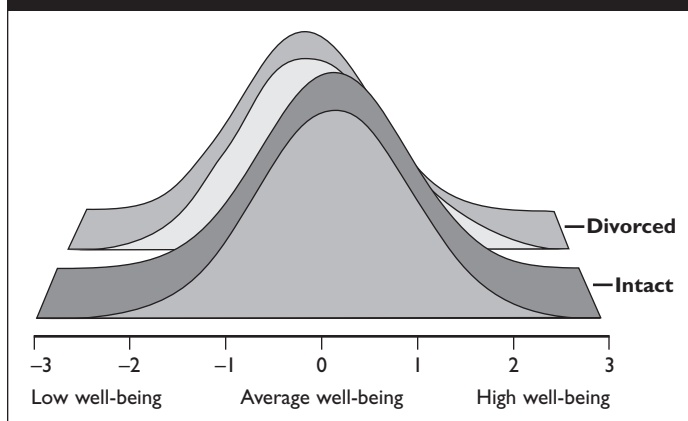
PUTTING WALLERSTEIN'S RESEARCH IN PERSPECTIVE

Wallerstein's research is qualitative and descriptive, in the oldest tradition of psychological research. Its closest relative is the clinical case study, which is the foundation on which clinical psychology built an understanding of human behavior. By its nature, it is depth-oriented; it provides specificity and great detail in its description of people's experiences. Also, by its nature, the number of people studied is relatively small;

the cross section in time is very narrow, compared with other types of research (though not in comparison with other longitudinal studies).

By itself this is not a problem. We need research of various forms to give us different types of readings, just as we need different types of diagnostic tests that measure different aspects of health or ill health. Our job is to try to put all the measures on the same page and understand how they fit together.

Figure 1. Typical distribution of well-being scores for children in divorced and intact families



The other end of the spectrum from qualitative research is a statistical review done by Paul Amato in 1994.⁴ His meta-analysis statistically pooled the data of 92 studies involving 13,000 children (preschool to college age) and 37 studies of adult children of divorce involving 80,000 adults. The huge sample lends both a tremendous validity to the findings and a fair stability of the findings across time.

Amato's analysis shows that children suffer as the result of divorce; as a group, they are less well adjusted than children of families with no history of divorce. However, the differences are very small and the overlap between the two groups very large. It is useful to see this visually. (See Figure 1.)

The clinical-case-example form of research tends to emphasize the particular, the specific. In the case of Dr. Wallerstein's work, it emphasized the experience of a specific group of children whose parents divorced in the 1970s, who were in sole custody arrangements, in a specific community. The meta-analysis is a form of analysis on the other end of the spectrum from Dr. Wallerstein's: the findings are general, nonspecific, not bound to either a locale or a point in time. For example, Amato's results are highly generalized; they fail to provide the "feel" of what it is like to go through the experience of divorce. But if we want to speak about the divorce experience for most children, we turn to Amato. If we want to hear about the emotional texture of the experience for *some* children, we turn to Wallerstein.⁵ Amato provides the larger view, and when we look at the larger view, we can be encouraged.

DIVORCE RESEARCH COMES OF AGE: DEALING WITH THE PROBLEM OF CAUSE AND EFFECT

Amato's and others'⁶ analyses show the development of single-problem-focused research, research that has focused on single issues, like teenage pregnancy, child abuse, poverty, and divorce. The central question of this research is, What effect does divorce (or poverty, or child abuse) have on children? As the research in all these areas has unfolded over the last 30 years, it has become clear that there is no single straight line between one cause and subsequent effects.

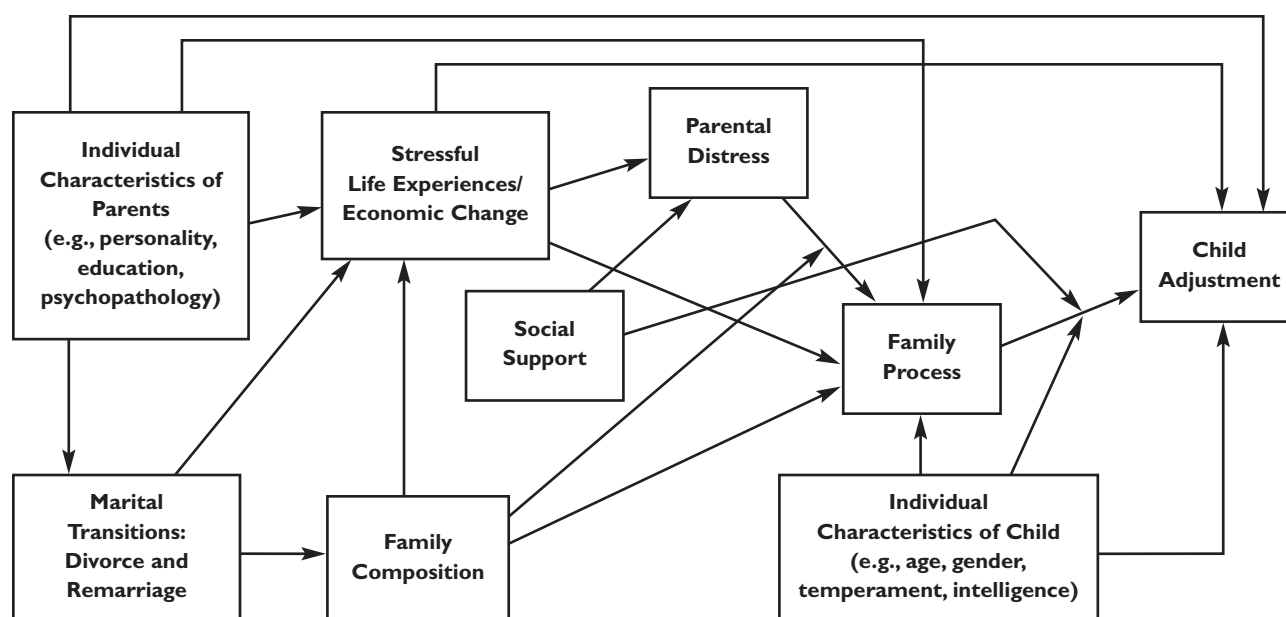
This is easier to see visually. Figure 2 shows the web of relationships between the variables that affect child adjustment. No line of causality exists between marital transitions and child adjustment; in every instance there are intermediate mitigating factors.

This multifaceted aspect of the research led researchers to turn the question on its head. Instead of asking, “What are the effects of divorce (or poverty, etc.) on children?” they began to ask, “Why do some children survive and even thrive in adverse circumstances, and why do some children fail to thrive or even survive?” Out of this has developed the concept of *resilience*, which is defined as the quality in children that allows them to survive, and sometimes even to thrive, in the midst of adversity.

Just as risk is multifaceted, adjustment and well-being in children are supported in multilayered ways: it is the redundancy of support, the safety nets in place in the various domains of a child’s life (home, school, community) that provides for good adjustment, or resilience. This is analogous to the multiple anchor points used by rock climbers on their safety lines—not just one anchor, not two, but three: if one support fails, the sudden jolt of reliance on the second support must be backed up by a third.⁷

In other words, it isn’t just the divorce. It is the combination of predivorce family functioning, the economic stress on the family, the loss of community and friends through a move, the new marriage, the loss of contact with one parent, the loss of functioning of the other parent, added up and compounding one another to create adversity. The support group at school, the solace of a best friend, the coach’s help, the success in the baseball league, the new skill learned—all add up to layers of

Figure 2. Predictors of children’s adjustment following divorce and remarriage: a transactional model



support. It is this multiplicity of adverse events added together in a short period that stretches the parent's or child's capacity to cope beyond his or her limits. Most people with average innate capacities can manage and grow from a moderate, or even severe, single stressor. *Repeated* stress, occurring before one has had a chance to recover from the last, is the injurious circumstance.

We are able to reduce the impact of divorce on children by addressing some of these related, attendant events. One of Amato's interesting findings was that the adjustment of the children in the later years of the research (1990s) was better than the children in the earlier years (1970s), using the same measures of adjustment. He postulates that our efforts to lessen the stigma attached to divorce reduced some of the isolating aspects of the experience for children. And the interventions we have been providing, in the form of education, mediation, helping both parents stay involved, have had an effect. The divorce research and resilience research show us that the supports in the community, school, and home domains matter hugely. When there is stress in one domain, children begin to rely on the other domains; and when there is support there, it makes the critical difference. Social support is crucial.

WHAT A DIFFERENCE 30 YEARS MAKES

Which leads us into the second contextual component: the social context. In 1970, when the parents in Dr. Wallerstein's research were getting divorced, there was no such thing as joint custody in California law.⁸ "Frequent and continuing contact" as a concept did not exist in law. Her children of divorce had a very different experience from today's children of divorce.

Wallerstein found that a major loss for the children she studied was the opportunity to develop "usable images of how an adult man and woman can live together"—also called "templates" of adult relationship. The point she makes so articulately is still a very important one, and an aspect that is rarely addressed. We are, however, worlds different in our conceptualization of co-parenting after divorce from where we were in 1970 and 1975.

The couple referred to earlier provided a good example of our collective effort to develop a concrete model of co-parenting, even from separate households. In addition to listening to their children's pain, they provided a list of things they did to make things better for their children:

- Allowing them their feelings of grief.
- Frequent and continuing contact.
- Occasionally we celebrate joint holidays.
- We keep transfers peaceful—we stay well behaved.
- Kids can have all the phone contact they want with the other parent.
- When sick, they stay where they want to.

We're not doctrinaire about Mom's time and Dad's time, kids sometimes opt to change schedule on a given day.

Five-minute walk between the two homes.

Dad helped kids buy birthday presents for Mom, and vice versa: we honor the other parent with them.

Both of us meet together with them for important things, on the theory that families need to team up in a crisis. (For example, we met together with them the morning of 9/11.)

We create no stress about their belongings.

Rules are somewhat divergent at each house, but not that far apart.

We don't take it personally if kids want to be at the other house.

We don't make them pack their own overnight bag, on the theory that they didn't make this mess, we did, and it's ours to clean up.

Not all the time, but occasionally it's okay for them to change their minds at the last minute about an activity or plan, on the theory that there should be some places where they can feel they have control over their lives.

We cannot eliminate the experience of loss from children's lives, nor should we imagine that we can do so: loss is a fact of all our lives. We must be cautious not to idealize the intact family of "days of yore," as one might be tempted to do reading Dr. Wallerstein. To a much more frequent extent than now, family life was disrupted by the death of a parent rather than by divorce. A portion of the rise of divorce is a function of our living longer: our ability to lengthen our lives has changed the divorce statistics as much as anything else, and therefore changed the type of loss children face.⁹ Rather than denying the impact of divorce (against which Wallerstein cautions us) or, on the other hand, overpainting the disaster of divorce for children on the other side (as some accuse Wallerstein of doing), *our task is to teach our children how to deal with loss, how to let it deepen them, and how to let it strengthen them.*

THE FAMILY JUGGLING ACT

Dr. Wallerstein pursues the image of the child abandoned by both parents: the divorced father and the back-to-work mother. This stands strongly juxtaposed with the image of *married* parents juggling work and home. The need for the two-income household is not only about divorce, but also about real-world economic pressures in both divorced and intact families.

On the one hand, we have created an economic situation in which there is not enough parenting time in intact families. On the other hand, economic stress may be one of the less-appreciated precipitants to relationship breakup. We do not require workplaces to make adjustments for parents, much less provide child-care services

on site. Housing costs are such that parents cannot live close to their work. Two-thirds of families *require* two incomes to survive, creating what Arlie Hochschild and Anne Machung call the unacknowledged, frequently contentious, “second shift.”¹⁰

When the two-income intact family divorces, the strain sometimes becomes unbearable. Some time back I mediated a situation in which the mother commuted from Antioch to Stanford, close to a 100-mile commute, while the father lived in Berkeley. Their question: Where would the child go to school? How will it be possible for this child to develop a community of his own, supported by his parents, much less have the advantages of living in a child’s community that is continuous and overlapping with his parents’ circle of friends?

Even under the best of circumstances, we do not live in a world in which it is easy to maintain relationships. Children develop relationships through the modern phenomenon called “play dates,” because often there is no continuity between the school and the neighborhood. For parents figuring out how to work, commute, go to PTA meetings, clean the house, shop for food, arrange play dates, coach soccer, this is logistically staggering. Where is the time to sit on the front porch and digest the day’s events? How do parents find the time for their children or even the time to think about their own relationship?

While parents are managing this tremendous logistical dance, they are blaming themselves for not being able to dance faster, not necessarily recognizing that things are structurally different economically and socially than when they were children. One of the reasons we don’t factor this in is that it is very difficult to get perspective on our own experience, either across a slice of history (How is “now” different from “back then”? Did the times change or did I?), or to get perspective in a contemporary sense, in relation to the social fabric around us (Is this just my problem, or is it really a societal problem?). The problem is that there is no place to stand, outside of our own perspective.

While Wallerstein’s message invites us, both parents and professionals, to feel guilty about our failure to support *children*, a more precise statement would be that we fail to support *families*.

THE FAILURE OF THE SUPPORTIVE STRUCTURE

It does injury to all of us to conceptualize divorce as either an individual or an interpersonal failure. The word *failure* participates in the language of guilt. Perhaps divorce has come to symbolize social failure, although that may not be precise, either. It may be that going through the experience of divorce and separation exposes us to other problems in our social structure, just as getting critically ill tends to expose one to the problems of health-care delivery. We have experienced a significant deterioration of our standard of living, and we are struggling to maintain the value of enduring

relationships in the face of technological and economic demands that seem to undermine our attempts to stay connected.

This deterioration has affected everything, including our institutions. Family law departments are under severe strain: stresses in families develop into symptoms, and the symptoms develop into family law actions—dissolution, domestic violence, child abuse. Yet, on a continuum of severity, “most acts now defined as violent or abusive are moderate, and stressful life circumstances contribute to their development.”¹¹ Parents who commit moderate maltreatment—maltreatment that does not endanger the children’s long-term health and safety, such as educational neglect or moderate physical abuse—are more likely to benefit from interventions that support their efforts to deal with the challenges of parenting than from aggressive, adversarial interventions.¹²

Family law departments are also victims of our neglect in supporting the family. During the last 30 years we have become more aware and knowledgeable about intervention with some problems (e.g., domestic violence); increased the demand for services through the pressure of population increases; dramatically increased the complexity of the work through the explosion of diversity in our population—all the while steadily decreasing our support of the institution we ask to provide those services.¹³

We can see the value we place on families and children by looking at the allocation of resources provided to family law. The percentage of judicial resources allocated to family law compared to other areas is often surprisingly low. Newcomers to the family law arena within courts are struck by the second-class citizenship given to the family law departments of most courts. Many non-family-law judicial officers have little appreciation for the level of technical skill and knowledge required, the immediate and profound impact of daily decisions on children and families, or the size and complexity of the financial matters handled routinely in family law.

This has a cascading effect, because it means that not enough time is provided for tailored, individualized remedies. People notice this. In one week recently, four parents from four different families reported to me their similar experiences in court. One said: “I know what happened [in court]. They have only ‘this much time.’ I fit a profile, and this is the custody arrangement assigned to the profile I fit.”

This sense of being anonymous, deserving only a kind of cookie-cutter justice, is the opposite of the value we would like to place on the enduring relationship between parents and children. It sends an institutional message—“You don’t count, and we don’t care”—which is actually completely contrary to how the professionals who work in family law actually feel, but who feel individually helpless to make things different.

How to make this better?

How do we say to ourselves, “We need to do this better, differently, this business of supporting families,” without running the risk of sounding as if we are scolding

ourselves and falling into the blame game that is already so prevalent in the divorce/separation process? Just as we need to say to parents, "We need to do this better, this business of raising children after divorce," without provoking crushing guilt or blaming the victim?

As professionals working with this issue, we are at risk: the layers of emotion to which we are constantly exposed put us at tremendous risk for cynicism, burnout, and a tendency to pathologize our clients. We distance ourselves into a professional "us versus them" relationship. Perhaps we simplify the world for ourselves occasionally by picking one side of a cause: men versus women, children versus parents, lawyers versus mediators, counselors versus judges. In our relationship to our institution we are vulnerable to the same stresses as are our clients: the trend toward anonymity, the press for efficiency, and the lack of time to work adequately, much less the time for the reflection needed to maintain equanimity and perspective.

And yet our work consists of maintaining equanimity, balance, perspective, even in the midst of tremendous emotional undercurrents. It requires years to acquire the technical skill to do the work and a combination of temperament and skill to survive and even thrive emotionally on the job.

There are things we can do to survive and succeed in this practice. *First, it is important to recognize that we have already taken some steps to mitigate the negative effects of divorce and to appreciate the difference we have made.* Children are less stigmatized by divorce; there is a more humane way for parents to negotiate with each other; we have created positive images of parents working together after divorce/separation. There is, though, plenty more work to be done. In this regard, it is important to understand that we may not actually see the effects of our efforts for many years. Our work moves forward on acts of faith, in trusting that if we use our best knowledge to date, it will make a difference. This is, after all, what parents do every day raising their children.

Second, we must fight our professional and personal isolation and figure out how to stay more connected to one another, as the basis for providing support to families. This means, as professionals, we work together to get family law specialists in judicial assignments because we are able to articulate the need for the level of technical expertise and training required in family law, and campaign for a more appropriate allocation of court resources. As a community of lawyers and mental health professionals both working in the courts and in the private sector, we need to create forums in which we meet regularly and discuss issues concerning us all.

As members of families, we need to provide more avenues of support for couples, including opportunities for conflict resolution *before* they are separating, and more images of couples working together. We need to create social supports for families: financial assistance for health care and child care, community centers for child activities. We need to tend, essentially, to the *social* infrastructure that we have neglected for far too long.

Third, we must recognize cynicism for what it is—a repetitive stress injury—and treat it. As professionals, we understand our cynicism as sign of work weariness and as a sign that something isn't going right, rather than as good information about how to act or what conclusions to draw, especially about our clients. As service receivers, we understand cynicism as undigested grief and disappointment, and sometimes as a reaction to feelings of helplessness and lack of control, rather than the fuel for indicting some whole section of the population—the judges, or the attorneys, or the mental health people.

Fourth, we must understand the larger social context surrounding our personal problems and avoid inappropriately personalizing all of our dilemmas, because this keeps us isolated and takes away energy that would be better spent joining together and working toward some of these changes. We need to name the blame game and recognize it as an attempt to simplify a situation in which not all the feelings line up and point in the same direction: there is relief and grief in separation; sometimes divorce is good for children, sometimes it is not (even for the same child, at different times).

Lastly, we need to figure out how to drop out of the rat race and reorder our time. The metaphors of the business world applied to family courts take us only so far. They help us deal with the increased diversity of our “customers,” streamline some processes, and introduce the value of courtesy in every encounter a customer may have with the “system.” The metaphors of the business world do not, however, provide the ethical ballast needed in our judicial system that would help us weigh the inevitable choices that arise between a process that is more efficient or one that is more thorough. Nor will those metaphors provide the less easily quantifiable but more socially vital criteria for success: that people who leave the courtroom have the deep assurance that they have been heard and understood, that time was taken to make the decisions concerning the most important arena of their lives.

We must be careful not to blindly accept the idea that calendar management—moving cases along faster—is the only solution, or even the correct solution. There are human processes that cannot, should not, be rushed: grieving, for example; development in a child, for another; finding the ability to maintain equanimity, for a third. Paradoxically, all these processes are facilitated in the long run when offered some time in the moment. Parents who have taken the time to grieve the end of their marriage are able to make a better adjustment, sooner, to their divorced lives and become better parents as a result. Children who have the time to devote to the tasks of growing (instead of fending off adversity or surviving) become more mature adults, who in the end give more to their environments than they *take*. Professionals who are allowed time to digest and reflect on the work they do last longer in their jobs and do more humane work that creates less negative feedback for the institution in the form of complaints, which in turn creates less work for others. True judicial economy takes time, but it is time well spent for families, children, and the courts.

NOTES

1. See, e.g., Sharon Lazaneo & Jacqueline Karkazis, *Dubious Legacy*, 16 READINGS: J. REVS. & COMMENTARY MENTAL HEALTH 18 (Mar. 2001).
2. E. MAVIS HETHERINGTON & JOHN KELLY, *FOR BETTER OR WORSE: DIVORCE RECONSIDERED* (W.W. Norton 2002).
3. It is also true that pain is created by choices that are ill considered and unwise. We could use many more intervention strategies that assist people in sorting out the wise and unwise decision to divorce and make those strategies more readily available.
4. Paul R. Amato, *Life-Span Adjustment of Children to Their Parents' Divorce*, 4 FUTURE CHILD 143 (1994).
5. In this respect, the original research is unsurpassed in its descriptions of the experience of divorce for children and parents. JUDITH WALLERSTEIN & JOAN KELLY, *SURVIVING THE BREAK-UP: HOW CHILDREN AND PARENTS COPE WITH DIVORCE* (Basic Books 1980).
6. E. Mavis Hetherington et al., *What Matters? What Does Not? Five Perspectives on the Association Between Marital Transitions and Children's Adjustment*, 53 AM. PSYCHOLOGIST 167 (1998).
7. For an excellent review of current resilience research, see Ann S. Masten & J. Douglas Coatsworth, *The Development of Competence in Favorable and Unfavorable Environments: Lessons From Research on Successful Children*, 53 AM. PSYCHOLOGIST 205 (1998).
8. The joint custody statute was signed into law in 1979 (Cal. Stat. 915).
9. Margaret Mead, *Anomalies in American Post-Divorce Relationships*, in *DIVORCE AND AFTER: AN ANALYSIS OF THE EMOTIONAL AND SOCIAL PROBLEMS OF DIVORCE* (Paul Bohannon ed., Doubleday Anchor 1979).
10. ARLIE HOCHSCHILD & ANNE MACHUNG, *SECOND SHIFT: WORKING PARENTS AND THE REVOLUTION AT HOME* (Viking Press 1989).
11. Robert E. Emery & Lisa Laumann-Billings, *An Overview of the Nature, Causes, and Consequences of Abusive Family Relationships*, 53 AM. PSYCHOLOGIST 121 (1998).
12. *Id.* at 122, 125.
13. In California, the changing pattern of government financing began in 1978 with Proposition 13, which cut property taxes. Over the years since, cuts in programs have reached into the marrow of state and local institutions, decreasing their effectiveness and justifying the public's distrust of governmental institutions—a self-fulfilling cycle. There were few staff increases in family court services during the 1980s and 1990s, so during that 15- to 20-year period, the same number of people were asked to provide a changing array of services to a significantly larger client group.